

three years, with details thereof and the action taken thereon?

**THE MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER):** (a) During the period 1.1.91 to 31.11.91, in all 1673 chartered buses which have been prosecuted have had fines levied upon them.

(b) and (c). Checking and penalties provided in the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and Rules framed thereunder have an impact on the erring permit holders.

(d) The chartered buses operate under contract carriage permits issued under Section 74 of the M.V. Act, 1988.

(e) No objections have been filed by the DTC with the Directorate of Transport, Delhi Administration during the last 3 years.

#### **Export of Agricultural Products, Diamonds and Pearls**

**2508. KUMARI VIMLA VERMA:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a vast scope for the export of agricultural products, polished diamonds and pearls; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to boost their export?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID):** (a) and (b). There is a good scope for the export of agricultural products and diamonds. The Government introduced a package of trade policy reforms aimed at strengthening of export incentives, eliminating substantial volume of import licensing and optimal import compression. REP licences have been replaced by a new

instrument named Exim Scrips. These will be the means of obtaining access to certain categories of imports of raw materials, components and spares. The system of advance licensing as an instrument of export promotion has also been strengthened. Government has decided to allow established exporters to open foreign currency accounts in approved banks and allow exporters to raise external credits, pay for export related imports from such accounts. Besides, Government have taken other steps which include reducing controls through licensing, simplification of procedures for export, activation of Board of Trade, bilateral discussion with selected countries, interaction with national organisations of trade industry, etc.

Export Policy in respect of certain agricultural commodities have been liberalised by shifting of items allowed for export under OGL, and also by de-controlling the export of selected agricultural commodities. The exchange trade adjustments will benefit agricultural exports also.

For boosting export of diamonds, Government has taken measures to facilitate availability of raw material, grant of replenishment facility ranging between 65% and 90% of FOB value of exports depending upon the carat realisation.

#### **Rouble and Rupee Credits Held by USSR against India**

**2509. PROF. K.V. THOMAS:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amounts of Rouble and Rupee credits held by USSR against India as on January 1, 1991; and

(b) the details of the agreements entered into with USSR regarding these credits, their nature, additions, disbursement, repayment etc?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) The USSR extends all Government to Government credits to India in Roubles. As on 1st January, 1991 the total outstanding Soviet credit on Government account was Rs. 2134.26 crores, converted into Rupees at the rate of exchange of Rouble 1 = Rs. 22.7855 on that date.

(b) From 2-2-1955 to 31-3-1991, the USSR Government have signed 18 agreements with Government of India for providing credits aggregating to Roubles 9995.36 million. The total disbursement in this period has been Roubles 2081.15 million. These credits are used for public sector projects in steel, power coal and oil sectors. Until April, 1977 the credits were repayable in 12 years with interest payment at 2.5% per annum. For agreements signed from April, 1977 the credits are repayable in 20 years inclusive of a grace period of 3 years with an interest of 2.5% per annum.

In case of recent power projects credits have also been extended to cover local costs. These credits are repayable in five annual instalments and carry an interest rate of 1.5% per annum over and above the rate against 91 days treasury bills of the Government of India.

The Soviet credits are denominated in Roubles but repayment of principal and payment of interest are made in non-convertible Indian Rupees which are utilised by the Soviet authorities for purchase of Indian goods for export to the USSR within the framework of the Indo-Soviet Trade Plan in force.

[Translation]

#### **Export of Tea to USSR**

2510. SHRI GOVINDRAO NIKAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of tea exports to USSR to the total quantity of tea exported during the last year;

(b) whether Indian tea has become costlier in the international market as a result of the devaluation of rupee;

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to prevent any adverse effects on the export of tea;

(d) whether the treaty to export tea to USSR has not been signed this year so far; and

(e) if so, the time by which the treaty is likely to be signed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) During 1990-91 the percentage of tea exports to USSR to the total estimated quantity of tea exported from India was 56.97 percent.

(b) and (c). The average unit export price at present would be US \$ 2.14 per kg. equivalent to Rs. 55.57 as compared to US \$ 2.91 per kg. during 1990-91 equivalent to Rs. 52.40, which is on an average cheaper by about 26.46 percent as compared to the export price in dollars during the previous year.

(d) and (e). The trade plan for 1992 with USSR has not been signed so far. The annual protocol is normally signed by the end of the calendar year.

[English]

#### **Modernisation of spinning Mills in Andhra Pradesh**

2511. SHRI J. CHOKKA RAO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state: